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The Cleveland Museum of Art Kicks Off its 2003-04 VIVA! Festival of Performing Arts with the “Voice of Latin America”

“Ms. Sosa maintains a balance between craft and conviction that endows her music with a searing honesty and power.” — The New York Times

CLEVELAND (Sept. 11, 2003) — The Cleveland Museum of Art (CMA) opens its acclaimed **VIVA! Festival of Performing Arts** with a performance by the grand dame of Latin American music Mercedes Sosa on **Friday, Oct. 3, 2003, at 7:30 p.m. in the Museum’s Gartner Auditorium.**

Admission to the performance is \$30 and \$27; \$27 and \$25 for CMA members. Tickets are available by calling 216-421-7350 or 1-888-CMA-0033 or online at www.ClevelandArt.org.

With her powerful voice and her compassionate message, Mercedes Sosa has garnered worldwide recognition as the voice of Latin America. The Argentine native is recognized as the country’s most successful popular artist during a career that has spanned more than 35 years. Having recorded literally hundreds of songs, Sosa’s music has always reflected the struggles of Latin Americans towards human rights and democracy during Latin America’s struggle against military dictatorships.

Appearing on the Argentine folklore scene in the mid 1960s, Sosa soon became one of the founding members of the *Movimiento del Nuevo Cancionero*, a music group formed to renew the artistic expressions of the time. Shortly after that, she recorded her debut album, *Canciones con fundamento*, and performed in the popular Cosquín Festival.

In the late 1960s, Sosa began to feel the initial pressures of censorship. Her assertive vocals had begun to cause a stir among the military government of her country and she often found herself censored on official radio stations. Undeterred by the pressures of her government, Sosa continued to release album after album until the harassment became unbearable. In the late 1970s, the government’s oppression caught up with her and she was arrested during a performance in La Plata City for singing *nueva canción* — “new song” — a song of protest and compassion, championing human rights in the face of government brutality. After her dramatic arrest during a live performance, Sosa was forced into exile, taking up residence in Madrid, Spain, in 1980. During her exile, she was able to establish an intense international following beyond the Argentine border.

After the return of democracy to Argentina in the 1980s, Sosa once again was able to perform in her native country. In those times, Sosa was considered a symbol of life to a country and people that had witnessed intense death and silence.

(more)

Years later, Sosa continues to perform worldwide tours. Her rich voice and broad international choice of songs from Cuba to Brazil, as well as her diverse Argentine repertoire and her profoundly humanistic view of life, have made her one of the world's most powerful female singers.

Single Tickets Now Available

Single tickets to the VIVA! Series are now available for individual concerts ranging from \$21 to \$35. Tickets may be ordered by calling 1-888-CMA-0033 or purchased online at www.ClevelandArt.org. Early reservations are strongly recommended.

The next performance in the VIVA! Festival of Performing Arts will be **Shobana: The Sensuous Dances of India on Friday, Nov. 21, at 7:30 p.m. in the Museum's Gartner Auditorium.** The Indian film star, dancer and choreographer Shobana Sharma has twice received the National Film Award for acting, as well as the highest dance awards. She will make her Cleveland debut with her company of six female dancers and four musicians in a program of Indian classical dance style, *Bhratanatyam*. Tickets are available for \$27 and \$24; \$24 and \$21 for CMA members by calling (216) 421-7350 or 1-888-CMA-0033 or buying online at www.ClevelandArt.org

Promotional support for VIVA! is provided by WNWV The Wave 107.3.

The Museum receives operating support from the Ohio Arts Council and the Institute for Museum and Library Services.

The Cleveland Museum of Art is one of America's leading comprehensive museums. Its permanent collection is world renowned for its quality and breadth, spanning 6,000 years. The museum is a significant international forum for exhibitions, scholarship and art acquisitions. For more information on the museum, its holdings, programs, services and events, call 1-888-CMA-0033 or visit www.ClevelandArt.org.

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